



## Impact of Social Assistance Changes

Mike Laliberte

- ▶ The Ontario Government has announced changes to the definition of disability for the Ontario Disability Support Program
  - ▶ The test will move from “substantial” disability to “severe and prolonged”
  - ▶ Hundreds of individuals will no longer qualify for ODSP benefits and will remain on Ontario Works
  - ▶ This change will specifically impact those with mental health issues and episodic disabilities
- ▶ The Ontario Government has also eliminated the Transition Child Benefit
  - ▶ The Transition Child Benefit replaces Child Tax Benefits that certain families are not entitled to
  - ▶ On average, 400 children/200 families impacted in the London area
  - ▶ Those applying for immigration status (convention refugees), a process which can take months, will no longer receive this benefit
  - ▶ Those who are eligible for the Child Tax Benefits but who have a large change in financial status will no longer receive this benefit
- ▶ We ask that the Council of the City of London communicate these concerns to the Ontario Government and request they reverse these changes to social assistance



## Cuts to LAO and Community Impact

Lawrence Burns and Chelsea McMullan

- ▶ 2019 Provincial Budget introduced 35% cut to Legal Aid Ontario's funding
  - ▶ Figure will rise to 45% within 3 years
  - ▶ This cut represents over half of overall cuts to MAG, despite LAO being just 20% of the Ministry's budget
- ▶ Some clinics in Toronto and other specialty clinics are facing large, retroactive cuts
  - ▶ Advocacy for Tenants Ontario - 25%; Income Security Advocacy Centre - 25%
  - ▶ Parkdale Community Legal Services - \$1 million (out of \$2.3 million) over 2 years
- ▶ Front-line services at NLSLM will be impacted when future cuts are implemented
  - ▶ Londoners will be left without legal representation for eviction, disability hearings
  - ▶ More Londoners accessing municipal housing supports, Ontario Works
  - ▶ Every \$1 spent on legal aid saves \$6 elsewhere
- ▶ We ask that the Council of the City of London communicate these concerns to the Ontario Government and request they reduce or reverse the cuts to LAO